

# PARENT TIMES



Mar. 2012 Vol. 37 No. 5

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## March Madness!

Spring is nearly here and that means great weather and tons of fun events before the heat sets in. We have some fabulous things coming up and we hope you'll join us!

### Spring Event

Our annual spring family event is this Saturday, March 17th. It will be at Christ Church from 10 am – noon. **Honey Bear's BBQ will be catering lunch and there will be a special surprise for dessert!** Bubbles, a bounce house, a face painter and lots of good company will round out this family-friendly party. Email Tricia Rochford ([rileys.mom@cox.net](mailto:rileys.mom@cox.net)) to help set up, clean up, or bring an appetizer. Please RSVP to the Evite, as it helps us to plan a fabulous event.

### Corks for Kids

Have you received your invitation and purchased your tickets? Our Corks for Kids fundraiser is **Saturday, April 28th from 5-8 pm at Phoenix Country Club**. We hope that you will come support our organization, spend time with friends, enjoy food and drink, check out our auction items, and then head out for dinner or a night out with your husband and/or friends!

Wondering why this event is so important for NCPG?? It is NCPG's mission to provide high quality parenting classes and camaraderie with other moms at a reasonable cost to you, the members. This means that we must fundraise in order to hire and retain high quality educational instructors, pay for rent, provide special events throughout the year and continue to offer nursery care by experienced caregivers, as membership dues and nursery fees only cover a percentage of what it takes to run our organization. It is with the help of our generous sponsors and revenue from our fundraisers that we can subsidize our organizational needs while balancing our budget. If you cannot attend, please remember that you can make a monetary donation to our non-profit organization (information with invitation). Please contact Lisa Barnes or Courtney Konderik at [fundraising@ncpgaz.org](mailto:fundraising@ncpgaz.org) if you have any questions about purchasing tickets, donating items or requesting an invitation for a friend/relative.

As we move through the madness of March, enjoy the outdoors and all Arizona has to offer. And, if you'd be willing to offer us some help, we're looking for some more lovely ladies to join our Board!

Go Blue Devils! Go Wildcats! Jen and Melissa



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CLASS STARTS AT 9:30!

We're all running around crazy... but please make every effort to be at class on time so you don't miss out on "HOT TOPICS" and class announcements! Thanks so much for your cooperation!

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*NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of pre-infant to kindergarten age children.*

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# Avoiding Acting and Modeling Scams

by Amanda Melby Crisalli, Verve Studio

"Your child is SO CUTE! He should be in commercials!"

Most likely all of us have heard that at some point or another. When it's from loved ones and friends we smile and thank them (and agree in our hearts!). But what if someone in the mall tells you that and hands you a business card?

Flattering? Yes. Your big break? No (sorry to burst your bubble), it's most likely a scam.

The majority of commercials are shot in LA and NY, some in Chicago. Sure, there is an occasional national commercial shot out of Phoenix, but it's not on a regular basis. And Disney or Nickelodeon shows have thousands of kids to choose from in LA; they don't need to be trolling Phoenix malls to find talent (or going to hotels for "open calls.")

What does that mean to you, the mom of the cute baby? That there isn't enough work here for an agent to submit your baby for. So how does that scam agent make their money? By charging you: for photos, for classes, for "jobs." They prey on your naivety.

A legitimate talent agent is licensed by the State of Arizona and only takes commission on work that you book. The cream-of-the-crop talent agents, the established, honest, legitimate ones, are also franchised with SAG and AFTRA, the professional actors' unions. There are five in Arizona. These agencies represent actors and models "across the board:" for all acting and modeling work including commercials, print, films, television, voice over, industrials, live work, fashion shows and more.

These legit agencies typically don't sign kids under 5 years old (why? There isn't enough work!), and will sign kids 5-8 years old that have acting experience. At this age, it doesn't matter how cute your kid is. It's not about cute. It's about following directions, listening well and being outgoing.

When it comes down to it, if it sounds too good to be true, just like everything else in life, it is.

*Amanda Melby Crisalli has been a professional actor for over 20 years and owns Verve Studios ([www.VerveStudio.net](http://www.VerveStudio.net)), a boutique music and acting studio in Scottsdale. She coaches actors age 5 and up and has group acting classes for ages 8 and up. She also teaches an Intro to Music class for 4-6 year olds. She is the mother of 6-year olds Sophia and 3-year old Juliana.*



## Easy Irish Stew from [www.lifeasamom.com](http://www.lifeasamom.com)

Our stew is pretty simple, containing few ingredients and cooking in the crockpot. I leave the baby carrots whole and chop the potatoes rather large, but you can chop them how you like them:

- 2 pounds chuck roast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- Bay leaf
- 2 cups baby carrots
- 4 medium potatoes, peeled, and cut into 1-inch chunks

Place beef cubes, flour, and salt and pepper in a large ziptop bag. Seal and shake to coat all cubes with flour. In large skillet,

heat oil until shimmering. Add beef cubes and brown on all sides. Do not crowd meat in pan. Do this in batches if your pan is not large enough to accommodate all the meat at one time. As meat browns, remove it to crockpot. Add onions to the drippings in skillet and sauté until tender. Add onions to the crockpot. Stir in beef broth and bay leaf. Cook on low for four hours. Add carrots and potatoes and stir gently to combine. Cook on low another four hours or until meat and vegetables are tender. Adjust seasonings with salt and pepper to taste.



# News & Events!



Don't Forget!!!

***Tickets are now on sale!!!***

You can purchase tickets before class in Nelson Hall, and you can also purchase tickets online at [www.ncpgaz.org](http://www.ncpgaz.org)

Ticket prices are \$35 per person or \$60 per couple. Price includes entrance to the event, live music, and hors d'oeuvres.

There will be a wine pull, cash bar and Silent Auction with packages such as a Sedona getaway, Disneyland tickets, a Las Vegas Golf Getaway, and much more!

There will be no class packages this year, however, if you know of a great item or service you can get donated or are interested in helping us secure more amazing items for the auction, please contact Lisa Barnes or Courtney Konderik at [fundraising@ncpgaz.org](mailto:fundraising@ncpgaz.org) for more information.

We want everyone to come this year, so please remember to bring your checkbooks to class, or go to [www.ncpgaz.org](http://www.ncpgaz.org) to register for the event.



**April 28, 2012, 5pm to 8pm**  
**Phoenix Country Club**

*(Attire is cocktail casual)*

## Spring Event

Lookin' for a pot of gold for your 'lil leprechaun??? Look no further than our family event on **Saturday, March 17th at Christ Church**. The fun starts at 10 am and there will be a bounce house, activities and lunch provided. Questions or suggestions? Email **Tricia Rochford**: [rileys.mom@cox.net](mailto:rileys.mom@cox.net)

## Join the Board for 2012-2013!

We are currently looking for members who want to become more involved with NCPG. If you are interested in joining the Board for next year, we would love to speak with you! Please contact **Melissa** and **Jen** at [director@ncpgaz.org](mailto:director@ncpgaz.org)

## End of Year Speaker

May 16th

Bob Hubbard with Hubbard swim school will present a swim safety and CPR refresher lesson for all parents. It will include visual aid as well as a Q&A at the end. A nice breakfast spread will be provided!



## Advertise in "Parent Times"

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*For info, contact Carole Anne ([caroleacook@yahoo.com](mailto:caroleacook@yahoo.com), 404-433-6738)*

# Gaga is fun to dance to and we love singing along with The Beatles, but did you know this...?

by Mary Goodman, Musicology

## We Have A Riddle:

what makes your baby or child bounce, smile, speak her first words, think creatively, pay attention, learn cooperation with peers AND develop motor skills? Ta-da! It's...MUSIC!

Music is the one activity that lights up all areas of the brain. Children who grow up hearing, singing and moving to music are experiencing a "rich sensory environment". That is, the more they are exposed to, the more neural pathways are forged between the cells in their brain.

## Food For The Brain

When a baby is first born her brain is only 25% wired. By age 1 her brain will be 75% wired and by age 3 her brain is 90% wired. That means we have our work cut out for us in the very important first three years! As caregivers we have the awesome task of giving our babies the love, security and sensory-rich environment needed to develop their brain, and give them the best start in life. Music has many key elements that feed the brain in a variety of ways.

## Music Is Pattern

The brain is a pattern seeking organ, and what better way to demonstrate patterns than through the joy of music! Music IS pattern. For example, a simple song like the beloved "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" showcases musical form and pattern perfectly. We all know the simple melody and lyrics that begin the song, "Twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are". The middle portion has a contrast in melody and lyrics "Up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky", and then the first line repeats again. This simple musical form, or pattern, may seem trivial to us as adults but our children are absorbing this information to form new connections in their brains.

## Music Helps With Focus and Attention

Music does, in fact, train areas of the brain involved with focus and attention. Ever notice that when your child is fussy just singing and dancing can engage them immediately? Why does a restless child in his carseat calm down instantly when Lady Gaga's "Poker Face" comes on the radio? Hmmm...

Better yet, music improves listening skills and concentration. This is especially beneficial as children enter school since this skill helps them filter out distractions and pay attention to the teacher. Overall, music training at early age forms cognitively strong minds which is generally sustained throughout the child's life.

## Music and Language

Dr. Seuss had it exactly right with his sing-songy rhymes and silly verses! "Big A, little a, what begins with a? Aunt Annie's alligator, a a a!" Language has rhythm and pitch just like music. Exposure to the various musical rhythms and beats at an early age help a child develop the foundation of rhythm needed to read. The sing-songy lyrics in music also reinforce language skills in our children. And strong language skills produce better readers and learners!

## Move It!

Movement with music helps develop motor skills and physical coordination. Children naturally respond to rhythms and beats they hear, whether it is Bob Marley, Mozart or The Wiggles! When your child enjoys music in a group setting they get the benefit of sharing, turn-taking, and cooperation in movement. Add in some colorful instruments and your child will love shaking and tapping along to their own beats and rhythms while developing muscle control and coordination.

## A Child's Emotional Intelligence

Music training sharpens the ability to recognize emotion in sound. Even young children can be moved by a weepy melody, or become jubilant by an upbeat fiddle. Music is how we connect with other human beings to celebrate, mourn and relax. This ability to connect with emotion in music also helps a child understand emotional cues in the social context of human behavior. For example, a child can pick up on another child's emotional cues when they are sad, frightened, angry or friendly. This type of emotional intelligence develops empathy, and stems bullying and aggression.

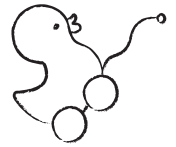
Above all, music is for enjoyment and fun! So turn on your favorite tunes (Bieber anyone?), and have fun dancing and singing with your child. Those feel-good endorphins are released from the brain and they make for happy, playful children!

Come check out a Musicology class  
with your child and discover the joy of moving  
and grooving to all styles of music!

NCPG members get a FREE trial class  
AND the \$25 registration fee  
is waived upon enrollment.



# New Arrival!



**Ryan Andrew Freeman**

November 29, 2011

Weight: 7 lbs, 1 oz

Height: 20 inches

Parents: Laura & Scott

Siblings: Abigail, Emma, and Eli



## Leprechaun Handprint

What you'll need:

- Green and black craft foam
- Orange paint
- Peach paint
- Paint brush
- Paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Yellow button
- Sharpie

1. Paint your child's fingers (excluding the thumb) orange and paint their palm peach. Stamp on the paper. Paint just the top of their palm orange for some hair. Allow to dry.
2. Cut a hat out of the green craft foam and a stripe for the hat out of the black foam.
3. Have your kids glue the hat and stripe on their little leprechaun. Glue a yellow button on the hat.
4. Using a sharpie, draw on his adorable little face.



## St. Patrick's Day Lime Bars

- 1 Cup Flour
- ¼ Cup Powdered Sugar
- ½ Cup Butter, melted (melt butter in microwave and add flour and sugar after)

Combine these ingredients and pat into a lightly greased 8x8 glass square pan. Bake at 350 for 20-22 minutes, until lightly golden.

Meanwhile, combine these ingredients with a whisk:

- 2 Eggs
- 1 Cup Granulated Sugar
- ½ tsp Baking Powder
- ¼ tsp Salt
- Zest of 1 Large Lime
- Juice of 1 Large Lime

Pour over the baked crust... return to the oven and bake 25 minutes. Cool completely and dust with powdered sugar!



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# Showing Appreciation to Your Children

by Vanessa Brown on [simplekids.net](http://simplekids.net)

I sometimes find myself being too negative with my children. I will hear myself correct them, ask them to stop things, hurry and start things way more often than focusing on positive things. I will tell them "Good Job" on different tasks like cleaning up their room or finishing the homework.

But I realized that I didn't give them genuine thank you's enough. Which made me a bit sad to realize, but now I have quickly gotten in the habit of showing appreciation to my children more often.

Showing appreciation to our children and also teaching them to show appreciation to each other can be done in many fun and playful ways. Here are just a couple of fun ideas to try:

## Over the Top Thank You Note

The thank you note could be an over sized Valentine, a funny card from the grocery store or a candy bar saying poster like the one below:



Just something that is a bit over the top and makes them stop and realize, "Wow Mom really is proud of me and is thankful for me!" I made my daughter this after her behavior had really been almost perfect for quite a few weeks in a row.

## Special Outing

Taking your daughter or son on a special one on one outing to sit with them and just tell them how thankful you are for them and specific things they have done. Just a walk around the neighborhood, short trip to get an ice cream cone or a drive through a pretty park.

It doesn't have to be expensive or over the top but something that takes them out of their normal element and makes them really pay attention to what you are saying to them.

## Their Favorite Thing

Does your son love a certain type of dinner? Or a certain TV show or movie? Or even a certain book? Prepare or sit down and watch/do their favorite thing with them. Tell them that you wanted to do this with them to spend time with them but also to tell them thank you for something they have done lately or a certain way they have been acting.

Most of all I think my girls have just really lit up and loved when I cover them in kisses and hugs and list all the reasons I am thankful for what they have done that day. Probably the most simple but most special way! It has really been helpful in my home to reinforce positive behavior, have a stronger feeling of love in my home and now I catch my daughters thanking each other more often.

**What are some simple ways you show your kids that you appreciate them?**

# Don't Carpe Diem

Glennon Melton, [Huffington Post](http://Huffington Post)

Every time I'm out with my kids -- this seems to happen: An older woman stops us, puts her hand over her heart and says something like, "Oh, Enjoy every moment. This time goes by so fast."

Everywhere I go, someone is telling me to seize the moment, raise my awareness, be happy, enjoy every second, etc, etc, etc.

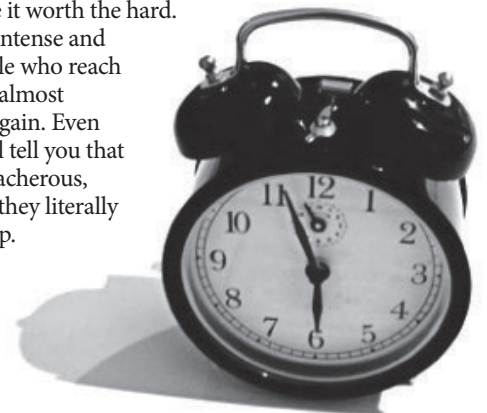
I know that this message is right and good. But, I have finally allowed myself to admit that it just doesn't work for me. It bugs me. This CARPE DIEM message makes me paranoid and panicky. Especially during this phase of my life - while I'm raising young kids. Being told, in a million different ways to CARPE DIEM makes me worry that if I'm not in a constant state of intense gratitude and ecstasy, I'm doing something wrong.

I think parenting young children (and old ones, I've heard) is a little like climbing Mount Everest. Brave, adventurous souls try it because they've

heard there's magic in the climb. They try because they believe that finishing, or even attempting the climb are impressive accomplishments. They try because during the climb, if they allow themselves to pause and lift their eyes and minds from the pain and drudgery, the views are breathtaking. They try because even though it hurts and it's hard, there are moments that make it worth the hard.

These moments are so intense and unique that many people who reach the top start planning, almost immediately, to climb again. Even though any climber will tell you that most of the climb is treacherous, exhausting, killer. That they literally cried most of the way up.

And so I think that if there were people stationed, say, every thirty feet along Mount Everest yelling to the climbers...



(continued on Back Page)





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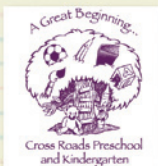
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(continued from page 8)

"ARE YOU ENJOYING YOURSELF!? IF NOT, YOU SHOULD BE! ONE DAY YOU'LL BE SORRY YOU DIDN'T!" TRUST US!! IT'LL BE OVER TOO SOON! CARPE DIEM!" -- those well-meaning, nostalgic cheerleaders might be physically thrown from the mountain.

Now, I'm not suggesting that the sweet old ladies who tell me to ENJOY MYSELF be thrown from a mountain. These are wonderful ladies.

Monkees, probably. But last week, a woman approached me in the Target line and said the following: "Sugar, I hope you are enjoying this. I loved every single second of parenting my two girls. Every single moment. These days go by so fast."

At that particular moment, Amma had arranged one of the new bras I was buying on top of her sweater and was sucking a lollipop that she must have found on the ground. She also had three shop-lifted clip-on neon feathers stuck in her hair. She looked exactly like a contestant from Toddlers and Tiaras. I couldn't find Chase anywhere, and Tish was grabbing the pen on the credit card swiper thing WHILE the woman in front of me was trying to use it. And so I just looked at the woman, smiled and said, "Thank you. Yes. Me too. I am enjoying every single moment. Especially this one. Yes. Thank you."

That's not exactly what I wanted to say, though.

There was a famous writer who, when asked if he loved writing, replied, "No, but I love having written." What I wanted to say to this sweet woman was, "Are you sure? Are you sure you don't mean you love having parented?"

I love having written. And I love having parented. My favorite part of each day is when the kids are put to sleep (to bed) and Craig and I sink into the couch to watch some quality TV, like *Celebrity Wife Swap*, and congratulate each other on a job well done. Or a job done, at least.

Every time I write a post like this, I get emails suggesting that I'm being negative. I have received this particular message four or five times -- G, if you can't handle the three you have, why do you want a fourth?

That one always stings, and I don't think it's quite fair. Parenting is hard. Just like lots of important jobs are hard. Why is it that the second a mother admits that it's hard, people feel the need to suggest that maybe she's not doing it right? Or that she certainly shouldn't add more to her load. Maybe the fact that it's so hard means she IS doing it right...in her own way...and she happens to be honest.

Craig is a software salesman. It's a hard job in this economy. And he comes home each day and talks a little bit about how hard it is. And I don't ever feel the need to suggest that he's not doing it right, or that he's negative for noticing that it's hard, or that maybe he shouldn't even consider taking on more responsibility. And I doubt anybody comes by his office to make sure he's ENJOYING HIMSELF. I doubt his boss peeks in his office and says: "This career stuff...it goes by so fast...ARE YOU ENJOYING EVERY MOMENT IN THERE, CRAIG???? CARPE DIEM, CRAIG!"

My point is this. I used to worry that not only was I failing to do a good enough job at parenting, but that I wasn't enjoying it enough. Double failure. I felt guilty because I wasn't in parental ecstasy every hour of every day and I wasn't MAKING THE MOST OF EVERY MOMENT like the mamas in the parenting magazines seemed to be doing. I felt

guilty because honestly, I was tired and cranky and ready for the day to be over quite often. And because I knew that one day, I'd wake up and the kids would be gone, and I'd be the old lady in the grocery store with my hand over my heart. Would I be able to say I enjoyed every moment? No.

But the fact remains that I will be that nostalgic lady. I just hope to be one with a clear memory. And here's what I hope to say to the younger mama gritting her teeth in line:

"It's helluva hard, isn't it? You're a good mom, I can tell. And I like your kids, especially that one peeing in the corner. She's my favorite. Carry on, warrior. Six hours till bedtime." And hopefully, every once in a while, I'll add -- "Let me pick up that grocery bill for ya, sister. Go put those kids in the van and pull on up -- I'll have them bring your groceries out."

Anyway. Clearly, Carpe Diem doesn't work for me. I can't even carpe fifteen minutes in a row, so a whole diem is out of the question.

Here's what does work for me:

There are two different types of time. Chronos time is what we live in.

It's regular time, it's one minute at a time, it's staring down the clock till bedtime time, it's ten excruciating minutes in the Target line time, it's four screaming minutes in time out time, it's two hours till daddy gets home time. Chronos is the hard, slow passing time we parents often live in.

Then there's Kairos time. Kairos is God's time. It's time outside of time. It's meta-physical time. It's those magical moments in which time stands still. I have a few of those moments each day. And I cherish them.

Like when I actually stop what I'm doing and really look at Tish. I notice how perfectly smooth and brownish her skin is. I notice the perfect curves of her teeny elf mouth and her asianish brown eyes, and I breathe in her soft Tishy smell. In these moments, I see that her mouth is moving

but I can't hear her because all I can think is -- This is the first time I've really seen Tish all day, and my God -- she is so beautiful. Kairos.

Like when I'm stuck in chronos time in the grocery line and I'm haggard and annoyed and angry at the slow check-out clerk. And then I look at my cart and I'm transported out of chronos. And suddenly I notice the piles and piles of healthy food I'll feed my children to grow their bodies and minds and I remember that most of the world's mamas would kill for this opportunity. This chance to stand in a grocery line with enough money to pay. And I just stare at my cart. At the abundance. The bounty. Thank you, God. Kairos.

Or when I curl up in my cozy bed with Theo asleep at my feet and Craig asleep by my side and I listen to them both breathing. And for a moment, I think- how did a girl like me get so lucky? To go to bed each night surrounded by this breath, this love, this peace, this warmth? Kairos.

These kairos moments leave as fast as they come- but I mark them. I say the word kairos in my head each time I leave chronos. And at the end of the day, I don't remember exactly what my kairos moments were, but I remember I had them. And that makes the pain of the daily parenting climb worth it.

If I had a couple Kairos moments during the day, I call it a success.

Carpe a couple of Kairoses a day. Good enough for me.

